

This Week In Congress

January 12, 2004

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." I hope you find this newsletter useful.

Combating BSE and Ensuring Food Safety

Prior to the Christmas holiday, the first U.S. case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), commonly referred to as "mad cow disease," was confirmed in the Northwest United States, in a dairy cow from Canada. Even though the United States has the safest food delivery system in the world, the BSE case will require additional measures to improve that system and to reassure foreign and domestic consumers.

For the past several weeks, I have been talking with Kansas cattle producers and ranchers about the initial response by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the safety measures already in place. During several of my town hall meetings, folks expressed their concerns about the media reports and the USDA procedures to stop the spread of BSE. I have shared these concerns with members of the House Agriculture Committee and USDA, and I anticipate congressional hearings this year on BSE and the effects of the USDA's new animal processing regulations. We must be certain that our government and the industry have responded sufficiently, and that the responses are based on sound science and common sense.

Continuing the "Big First" Listening Tour

I held 11 town hall meetings in 11 communities this week as part of my annual "Big First" Listening Tour and will be visiting with folks in 14 communities this coming week. I will be stopping in Oakley, Colby, Goodland, St. Francis, Sharon Springs, Tribune, Syracuse, Lakin, Holcomb, Marion, Strong City, Emporia, Hamilton and South Hutchinson over the next few days.

For more information about the tour stops and for a complete schedule, please visit my website at: http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/ks01_moran/prTourSchedule04.html

I look forward to visiting with you when I am in your area.

Visiting Ashland Health Center

After my Clark County town hall meeting on Monday, I also visited the Ashland Health Center. During the visit, I was able to tour the hospital, nursing home and medical clinic. I met with Bryan Stacey, the hospital administrator, and visited with the nursing and support staff. The hospital officials expressed their support for the Critical Access Hospital program.

Very truly yours,

Jerry